



CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK

EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE GREEK-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

As the son of a Slovakian immigrant, I understand more than most that ours is a Nation of immigrants. The Greek-American community has made invaluable contributions to the heritage and productivity of the United States, and Greece represents a beacon of democracy that is admired for its history and contributions in furthering democratic principles around the world. As the representative of Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional District, I proudly serve more than six thousand constituents of Greek-descent and have taken a leadership position on many of their key priorities. I am now running for the U.S. Senate to bring the same representation and leadership to the 57,000 citizens of Greek-descent living throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

UNYIELDING SUPPORT FOR THE GREEK-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

MEMBER OF THE CONGRESSIONAL HELLENIC CAUCUS

A- RATING FROM THE COORDINATED EFFORT OF HELLENES

SUPPORTED LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES HONORING GREECE AND THE GREEK-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

COSPONSORED AND VOTED FOR H.RES. 273, RECOGNIZING THE 188TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE AND CELEBRATING GREEK AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Congratulates the Greek people as they celebrate the 188th anniversary of Greece's independence; supports the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations. *Passed the House in the 111th Congress.*

COSPONSORED H.RES. 202, COMMEMORATING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE

Recognizes the significant contributions of American Citizens of Greek Ancestry and Philhellenes to the United States. *Ordered to be reported by unanimous consent by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in the 111th Congress.*

VOTED FOR H.CON.RES. 71, COMMEMORATING THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE AMERICAN HELLENIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION (AHEPA)

Commemorates the 85th Anniversary of the founding of AHEPA, a leading association for the Nation's 1.3 million American citizens of Greek ancestry, and Philhellenes. *Passed the House and Senate in the 110th Congress.*

STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE 2009 POLICY POSITIONS OF THE AMERICAN HELLENIC INSTITUTE

AGEAN SEA BOUNDARY

I agree with the Institutes' position that Turkey must publicly accept the demarcated maritime border with Greece in the Aegean Sea. Turkey must abide by international maritime law and relevant treaties as proof that it is a good faith actor on these matters. To that end, in February, I signed a letter to President Obama urging Turkey to "abandon its displays of force in favor of the diplomatic process." I believe progress on this issue would be a necessary step before supporting Turkey's accession to the European Union.

FYROM NAME RECOGNITION

As you know, the longstanding stalemate between Greece and FYROM regarding the name issue is unsustainable and must reach a conclusion through good faith negotiations. I believe it is important that countries abide by their international obligations. In an area of Europe where there has been so much conflict recently, any effort to reduce

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racial tension and ethnic hatred should be supported and applauded. To that end, **I support the Institute and President Obama's efforts calling for a cessation of all forms of propaganda on the matter.** I will work with my colleagues in Congress, as well as members of the Administration to assure a quick and suitable resolution of this conflict. I have supported and will continue to work toward passage of legislation calling on FYROM to cease its use of propaganda and urge FYROM to work with Greece to find a mutually acceptable official name under the auspices of the United Nations. To that end, I supported House Resolution 356 in the 110th Congress, sponsored by Representative Maloney.

GREEK MINORITY IN ALBANIA

The United States has a responsibility to protect vulnerable populations around the world as a global leader in the cause of Human Rights. As you know Albania's government has not yet proven to be a good-faith actor in these efforts. **I agree with the Institute's assessment that the United States must continue to pressure the Albanian government through diplomatic means to uphold its responsibilities to the Greek minority population as laid out under international law.**

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

I agree with the Institute's position that Greece has been excluded from the Visa Waiver Program for far too long. That is why, in February, I signed a letter to President Obama stating that "Greece's inclusion is long overdue." I urged the President to work with Greek officials to ensure the process for its entry into the program moves forward as efficiently as possible. These steps are only logical, considering Greece has already been named a candidate country for the program by the State Department.

A SOLUTION TO CYPRUS BY CYPRIOTS FOR CYPRIOTS

I fully support the Institute's position on this issue. The rule of law, respect for international law and calls for self-representation must be answered with regard to Cyprus. For too long, Cypriots have been unable to form the constitutional democracy they desire. Turkey must live up to its international responsibilities and return all of Cyprus to the Cypriots. During my time in Congress, I have been extremely supportive of legislation to do just that. In the 110th Congress, I supported House Resolution 405, which supported the 2006 agreement reached between the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Tassos Papadopoulos, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mehmet Ali Talat. Additionally, in February, I signed a letter to President Obama applauding his commitment to exercise U.S. leadership in the negotiation for a just solution on Cyprus. We agree that a solution to the Cyprus problem should result in a single, sovereign country within a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation. I also signed a letter to both President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton which called for the withdrawal of Turkish military forces from Cyprus. Surely, 35 years of discord is long enough. Cypriots deserve a government for them and by them.

TURKEY'S NEW THREAT TO PEACE

Having served in the Navy for 31 years, I know well the importance of the laws of the sea. **I support the Institute's call for a just and reasonable resolution to discord at sea, however,** the United States Senate's failure to ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea has left this issue unresolved. I believe the U.S. can still exert pressure on all parties to act in good faith to resolve threats to peace, including those which occur on disputed waterways, seas and oceans.

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE & HALKI THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

I support the Institute's position on the issue of the Ecumenical Patriarchate & Halki Theological School. As a world leader on human rights and individual liberty, the United States must call on Turkey to extend religious freedoms to citizens. For that reason I am supportive of the intent of House Resolution 236. Additionally, earlier this summer I voted for, and the House passed, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which contained the following language in Section 1105: "It shall be the policy of the United States to urge Turkey to: (1) respect property rights and religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarch; (2) grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate appropriate international recognition and ecclesiastic succession; and (3) grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate the right to train clergy of all nationalities, not just Turkish nationals. In a February letter to President Obama I called on the President to restore full rights to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, noting "we commend you and Vice President Biden for calling on Turkey to restore the full rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, including its property rights, and to reopen the Halki Theological Seminary. We

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remain distressed by the Turkish state's continued refusal to respect the basic human rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate."

RECOGNIZE THE GREEK PONTIAN GENOCIDE AND MISTREATMENT OF GREEKS ON IMRBOS AND TENEDOS

I am extremely sensitive to the seriousness of this issue to all communities involved. Certainly, we can agree that genocide is one of the most abhorrent of all human failures, whether past or present. I look forward to working with my colleagues and leaders in the Greek community to reach a resolution which allows all parties to move forward amenable toward a productive future.

CRITICAL REVIEW OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD TURKEY NEEDED

I believe that Turkey's role as a U.S. ally gives the United States leverage to hold Turkey accountable for human rights violations, in its own territory and in Cyprus. For example, as I have previously noted, I have called on President Obama to urge Turkey to "abandon its displays of force in favor of the diplomatic process" and also wrote letters to the President and Secretary of State Clinton calling for the withdrawal of Turkish military forces from Cyprus. I believe that Cypriots should determine their government and the fate of their own territory and I believe these issues can be resolved diplomatically. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress, the Administration and the Greek community to resolve these issues.